

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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TAGS: EAID, EAGR, SU, US, PDEV
SUBJECT BONA MALWAL'S VIEWS RE DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH

1. EVENING MARCH 17 I ATTENDED VERY SMALL FUNCTION HOSTED BY
BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN HONOR OF VISITING CONSERVATIVE MP RICHARD
LUCE. LUCE APPARENTLY WOULD HOLD HIGH POSITION IN UK FONOFF
OR MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT, SHOULD TORIES COME
TO POWER.

2. DURING MOST OF THE EVENING I PARTICIPATED IN A FRANK EXCHANGE
AMONG BRITISH AMBASSADOR, FRG AMBASSADOR, LUCE, AND SUDANESE
MIN INFORMATION, BONA MALWAL. MALWAL IS SOUTHERNER, U.S.
EDUCATED, AND HIGHLY ARTICULATE.

3. MALWAL DID MOST OF THE TALKING. THRUST OF HIS PRESENTATION
WAS THIS: SOUTHERNERS APPRECIATED MOTIVES BEHIND CURRENT
US AND UK AID POLICIES TO EFFECT THAT ASSISTANCE SHOULD BE
LARGELY RESTRICTED TO THE "POOREST OF THE POOR" AND CONSIST
MAINLY OF SIMPLE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AIMED AT MODEST
INCREASES OF PRODUCTION BY TRADITIONAL FARMERS.

HE SAID,
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HOWEVER, SOUTHERNERS WOULD SIMPLY NOT RESPOND TO SUCH PROGRAMS.
THEY BELIEVED MUCH MORE WAS NEEDED TO ALLEVIATE THEIR
PRESENT DESPAIR AND TO GIVE THEM A BASIS FOR HOPE FOR A BETTER
FUTURE.

4. IT HAD NOW BEEN CONCLUSIVELY ESTABLISHED, SAID BONA,
THAT RICE, COFFEE, AND TEA CAN BE ECONOMICALLY PRODUCED

IN THE SOUTH. SOUTHERNERS FEEL THAT THEY DESERVE LARGE PERMANENT TENANT FARMER SCHEMES TO PRODUCE THESE CROPS ON A MASSIVE SCALE, A LA GEZIRA AND RAHAD PROJECTS. THEY WOULD NOT RPT NOT VENTURE TO GROW THESE NEW PRODUCTS UNLESS THEY WERE GIVEN THE SECURITY OFFERED BY PARTICIPATION IN A LARGER PROJECT.

5. COMMENT: I AM NOT IN A POSITION TO EVALUATE BONA'S STRONG OPINION, BUT I DO NOT THINK WE SHOULD LIGHTLY DISMISS HIS VIEWS. REPORTS FROM OUR POLITICAL OFFICER WHO RECENTLY VISITED THE SOUTH, PLUS MY OWN LIMITED OBSERVATION THERE, INDICATES THAT THE SOUTHERNERS REMAIN HIGHLY TRAUMATIZED BY THE CIVIL WAR WHICH ENDED ONLY A FEW YEARS AGO. WACH REPORTED, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT SOUTHERNERS AROUND JUBA ARE CONFINING THEIR EFFORTS TO HARD SCRABBLE SUBSISTENCE FARMING. IT IS ZAIRIAN REFUGEES WHO HAVE STARTED TO GROW VEGETABLES FOR A NEW AND RAPIDLY DEVELOPING MARKET.

6. BONA IS A SKILLED POLITICIAN AND WHAT HE SAYS SEEMS TO US TO MAKE GOOD POLITICAL SENSE ABOUT THE SOUTH. THE VISIBLE EVIDENCE THAT THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WAS CREATING LARGE MODERN PLANTATIONS IN THE SOUTH AS WELL AS THE NORTH COULD GREATLY STRENGTHEN THE UNITY OF THE COUNTRY. WHETHER SUCH PROJECTS WOULD MAKE ECONOMIC AND DEVELOPMENT SENSE, I DO NOT KNOW. WE SHOULD, HOWEVER, BE IN A POSITION TO DISCUSS THE PROS AND CONS OF SUCH PROJECTS IN DEPTH WITH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE SUDANGOV AND SOUTHERN LEADERS.
BERGUS

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